

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAMA 000335

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS TO USAID AND USPTO
DEPT FOR NEA/PI SFRANCESKI, NEA/ARP:PHEFFERNAN,
EB/TPP/MTA/MST:BMITCHELL, EB/CIP/BA:ALEWIS,
EB/TPP/BTA/ANA:EWITAKER, OES:CRICHARD, L/OES:HDAS, AND
DRL/IL:KAUDROUE
DEPT PASS USTR JASON BUNTIN FOR WIDER DISTRIBUTION
LABOR FOR WCLATINOFF AND LKARESH
COMMERCE FOR CLOUSTAUNAU, GTHOFFMAN, MPRIMLANI, SBHATNAGAR,
ESKED
USPTO FOR PFWOWER, LLOURIE, DMORFESI
AGRICULTURE FOR MMEADOR
USAID FOR JTIKKA AND JCARLSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMPI](#) [ETRD](#) [EAID](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: BAHRAIN'S FTA TA REQUESTS: POST INPUT

REF: A. BAHRAIN'S 3/5 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROPOSAL

B. MANAMA 272

SUMMARY AND COMMENT: In anticipation of the March 11 interagency meeting to discuss FTA-related technical assistance priorities for Bahrain, post is submitting our prioritized A-basket (30-60-day timeframe) shortlist to contribute an on-the-ground perspective to the meeting. In prioritizing this A-list, post has focused on projects falling into the top three areas where the Bahrainis have stated that technical assistance is needed: 1) drafting of legal texts; 2) enforcement procedures; and 3) training of personnel, and on projects that could be implemented quickly with readily apparent results. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

1. Drafting of legal texts: Begin across-the-board assistance to review existing legislation and draft legal texts to comply with the requirements of the agreement (as noted on Page 1, item 1). This is necessary to expedite Bahrain's readiness to bring the FTA into force and to implement the agreement. (NOTE: As described in ref B, this assistance will need to be provided delicately, since there are sensitivities resulting from not entirely satisfactory experiences with foreign legal assistance. END NOTE.) This assistance should include review of proposed IPR legislation (Basket B, Item 4).

2. Transparency mechanism/e-commerce/e-government: Although not listed among Bahrain's requests, Post is convinced that Bahrain needs to develop a modern mechanism to enhance participation in the development of laws and notification of legislative changes. We propose the development of a website that would include a comment/consultation mechanism for draft legislation, electronic notification (vice the printed gazette) of new legislation, and a searchable electronic register of existing legislation (also in English translation).

3. Customs: Implementation-related technical assistance, especially with respect to the rules of origin, risk assessment and technology for customs inspections (Basket A Item 4). Bahrain will need to develop a mechanism to deal with re-imports of U.S. products from other GCC countries as well as re-exports of U.S. products into other GCC countries by January 1, 2005, when the GCC Customs Union single point of entry mechanism is scheduled to take effect.

4. Environment: Adopt-A-School-Bus program--retrofitting particulate filters onto school bus diesel exhaust systems. This project emerged from consultations with 2003 EPA Embassy Science Fellows from USEPA Sector 6, which has experience with the Adopt-A-School-Bus program. Active coordination between the Bahrain Environmental Authority and USEPA Sector 6 means that this program could be up and running fast--as soon as funding is made available--and we would see clear, positive results.

5. Labor/Textiles: Active bilateral coordination is developing ideas for useful assistance programs. It would be wise to reserve some funding to be able to quickly fund initial projects (e.g., a possible study of alternative employment options for garment workers, development of retraining program descriptions) as they emerge from this dialog, especially because this politically important issue impacts Bahrain's stability.

6. IPR Enforcement: Technical assistance on the identification and development of Bahrain's enforcement procedures, as well as staff exchange training of IPR staff and the staff involved in the enforcement process in customs, the judiciary, and police (Basket A, Item 5). The GOB has demonstrated consistently the will to enforce IPR protection. Bahrain's principle weakness is that the staff on the ground

and the courts are insufficiently familiar with IPR to always make good decisions. This is an area where we could move quickly and have visible impact that would be appreciated by the U.S. and Bahraini business communities.

17. SPS: Begin technical assistance in strengthening, surveillance, control, monitoring and enforcement of standards and procedures in order to ensure the quality and safety of imported and locally manufactured foods (Basket B, Item 8). Bahrain has committed to revised shelf-life standards and non-ICCP standards. We could reward this stance by helping the Bahrainis quickly develop an alternate system that will work for them.

FORD